

A Tale of Two Corns

When you're driving down a highway in the Corn Belt and see acre after acre after acre of corn, don't jump out and grab an ear for some impromptu corn on the cob. Chances are, it's the wrong sort of corn.

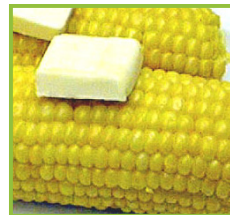
There are two corns in the United States, and field corn is by far the most common, grown on more than 99 percent of all corn acres. While a small portion is processed for use as corn cereal, corn starch, corn oil and corn syrup for human consumption, it is primarily used

for livestock feed, ethanol production and other manufactured goods. It's considered a grain. Sweet corn is what people purchase fresh, frozen or canned for eating. It's consumed as a vegetable. Unlike field corn, which is harvested when the kernels are dry and fully mature, sweet corn is picked when immature.

The following statistics from the U.S. Department of Agriculture will give you a sense of the size of these two vastly different industries.

Field Corn

- 91.9 million planted acres
- 12.4 billion bushels produced
- Crop Value: \$76 billion



Sweet Corn

- 656,600 planted acres
- 166.3 million bushel equivalents
- Crop Value: \$1.2 billion

What do some of these words mean?

A bushel of corn is 56 pounds, about the weight of a large bag of dog food.

An acre is about the area of a football field.

How Field Corn is Used

In 2011, corn farmers grew 12.4 billion bushels of field corn.

The total corn supply, including the corn carried over from 2010, is 13.5 billion bushels.

34% of the field corn supply in the United States (4.6 billion bushels) is used as feed for livestock such as beef, pork or poultry.

29% (3.9 billion bushels) is used directly for ethanol production. This excludes the corn that goes into ethanol plants and becomes distillers grains, the equivalent of 1.2 billion bushels of corn for livestock feed, **9%** of the total corn supply.

12% (1.6 billion bushels) is exported to other countries. The top five countries to which the United States exports corn are Japan, Mexico, South Korea, Egypt and Taiwan.

10% of the corn (1.4 billion bushels) goes to other food, seed and industrial uses. Field corn is a source of high fructose corn syrup, corn cereal, corn starch, corn oil and corn syrup. Hundreds of other products are also derived from corn, such as some fabrics and packaging.

In addition, about 7% of the total corn supply (currently 900 million bushels) is carried over as a surplus for the next year.

